

# Beyond the Page: Henry's First-Moon Birthday

Subject: Language Arts; Social Studies

Running time: 18 minutes

## Objectives

The student will:

- gain a deeper understanding of the book *Henry's First-Moon Birthday*, written by Lenore Look and illustrated by Yumi Heo;
- be motivated to read more books and find out more about the author, illustrator, and subject matter; and
- learn more about Chinese-American culture.

## Synopsis of the Book

Jenny's baby brother, Henry, is having a party for his first moon, his one-month birthday. At first Jenny's not sure Henry deserves a big party, since he just eats, cries, and sleeps. All day long, Jenny helps GninGnin, her grandmother, get ready. They dye eggs red for good luck, cook pigs' feet and ginger soup, and write good-luck notes in Chinese. At the party, Jenny feels proud when her grandmother praises her hard work. Someday, she will tell Henry how lucky he was that his big sister was in charge of his first-moon birthday party.

## Synopsis of the Video

At the Beyond the Page Café, Today's Special is *Henry's First-Moon Birthday*, written by Lenore Look and illustrated by Yumi Heo. Our host Shelley reads the story aloud to the Café's guests as we view an animation of Heo's illustrations. The illustrator combined paint and paper collages to create fun, vibrant scenes. After reading the story, the children have an online chat with Lenore Look, who talks about the good-luck eggs in the story, and with the illustrator, Yumi Heo, who explains her cut-out illustration techniques. Next the kids watch a video about Chinese tradition.

## Preview Questions/Discussions

1. What do you know about Chinese American foods, holidays, or other traditions? What do you want to find out?
2. Why is it sometimes difficult for an older sibling to accept a new baby in the family? How can other family members help the older sibling feel better?

## Post-Viewing Questions

1. How does Jenny help GninGnin get ready for the party?
2. Is Jenny jealous of her brother? How can you tell? What other feelings does she have toward him?
3. What is special about the red eggs? If you could choose a lucky symbol, what would it be?
4. At the Beyond the Page Café, kids get information from books, videos, and the Internet. If you wanted to learn more about Chinese American culture, what media would you choose? Explain your choices.

## Related Activities

1. Have students look at the illustrations of Jenny and GninGnin cooking. Ask students to draw or paint funny pictures of them cooking their favorite meal or doing another activity with an older family member. Suggest they include "floating" items in the style of Yumi Heo.
2. Invite students to conduct a "celebrations survey" with fellow students and family members. Have them jot down questions about what people do to celebrate birthdays, and other festive occasions. Encourage students to interview people who follow customs that originated in other countries or cultures other than their own. Then have them report what they learned to the class. Help them mark on a world map the country in which each custom originated.
3. Have students recall the online chat with Lenore Look, the author, and Yumi Heo, the illustrator of *Henry's First-Moon Birthday*. Help students formulate their own questions for the author and illustrator. Encourage them to send their questions and comments to Look and Heo at the following address:

**Lenore Look and Yumi Heo**  
c/o Anne Schwartz Books  
Atheneum Books for Young Readers  
Simon & Schuster  
1230 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10020-1513

## Resources

### Disney Educational Productions

[www.Edustation.Disney.com](http://www.Edustation.Disney.com)

Additional information, including books, videos, and Web links.

### Welcome to Los Angeles Chinatown

<http://www.cbintownla.com/main.htm>

A virtual tour of Los Angeles Chinatown, including a history and culture link.

### National Education Technology Standards Project

<http://cnets.iste.org/index2.html>

(Scroll to Search Lessons. Pull down Awesome Authors.)

Cole, Joanna, *The New Baby at Your House*; photography by Margaret Miller (Mulberry Books, 1999).

Wong, Janet S., *Apple Pie Fourth of July*; illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine (Harcourt, 2002).